

SEOW Meeting Minutes for September 8, 2006

Members present: Ruth Gassman, Barbara Seitz de Martinez, Jim Wolf, Karla Carr, Niki Crawford, Martha Payne, Amanda Thornton, Mary Lay, Dave Bozell, Kim Manlove, Marcia French, Eric Wright, Harold Kooreman, Rachel Thelin, Marion Greene

Members absent: Terry Cohen, Roland Gamache, Barbara Lucas, Miranda Spitznagle, Maggie Lewis, Robert Teclaw, Kathy Lisby, Richard Vandyke, Diana Williams, Janet Whitfield-Hyduk, Thomas DeLoe, Sheila Nesbitt, John Viernes, Jeanette Grissom

The first order of business was to approve minutes from the last meeting. Minutes could not be approved due to insufficient number of voting members.

Eric gave an update on the status of the drug fact sheets. He stated that the final version will be sent to the printer on Monday (9/11/2006) and be ready for distribution by the end of the month.

Eric reported on the meeting he had with Kim, Marcia, and the SEOW support team, on 9/7/2006, regarding allocation strategies. He noted two objectives: (1) to address at least one of the six priorities, and (2) to address capacity. Furthermore, he explained the model that was discussed on the September 7th meeting. According to the proposed *Indiana's Allocation Plan*, communities will go through a standard request-for-proposals (RFP) process. The goal is to allocate money to high-need communities [community's rate of use is greater than state's rate of use], and special consideration can be given to highest-need communities who rank in the top 25%. Furthermore, in order to be eligible for funding, applicants must establish high capacity/low capacity partnerships, i.e., at least one high and one low capacity organization will have to work together. Eric referred to the table in *Indiana's Allocation Plan* that listed communities as high or low capacity according to their Local Coordinating Councils (LCC) and assessment by Sonya Cleveland at ICJI.

Dave Bozell stated that Bartholomew County was not on the list for neither high nor low capacity LCCs. Barbara Seitz de Martinez added that Allen County was not either. Eric replied that we will follow up on this.

Kim Manlove reported on a discussion he had with Tom DeLoe in Lexington and stated that *DrugFree Communities* might gain some extra points in the grant-giving process.

A discussion about limiting the definition of high/low capacity to LCCs followed. Mary Lay stated that labeling communities based on their LCC level might be a dangerous strategy, because it could pit communities against each other. Amanda Thornton agreed. Mary Lay asserted that we should never put communities against each other; each has its strengths and weaknesses. Rather than only considering their LCCs, she suggested giving communities a rating scale to assess capacity.

Eric came back to the issue of forcing partnerships between high and low capacity communities, for the benefits of diffusing technology and to help low capacity communities.

Barbara Seitz de Martinez proposed a capacity building exercise: applications would call for high capacity/low capacity partnerships; but communities should define themselves as high or low capacity and make partnerships. They would be able to explain their reasoning for the partnership (“why it makes sense”).

Mary Lay replied that CSAP offers a 6-9 month community-building program free-of-charge. Eligible applicants would participate in the community-building process for the first year, and then receive program funding.

Eric mentioned that in order to decrease prevalence rates within Indiana, five years are not a long enough time span and that we need to build capacity within communities to make a difference. He also noted that in a large pie, the grant money is only “a crumb and a half”; and that using all six priorities “will water it down even more”.

Marcia French suggested setting criteria for high and low capacity communities and let them [communities] self-identify according to these criteria. High and low capacity partnership organizations could share ideas, plans, and strategies via phone, since they probably would not physically get together all the time.

Eric replied that Harold and he had tried to define capacity, which is a difficult concept to determine. CSAP describes it as program capacity.

Mary Lay agreed that capacity is difficult to define. She recommended not using LCCs as criteria for high/low capacity communities but instead addressing very specific criteria or giving good definitions for high and low capacity.

Eric then mentioned the need to focus on outcomes and the application of evidence-based strategies to address identified prevention priorities.

Ruth Gassman cited Dennis D. Embry’s article “Community-based prevention using simple, low-cost, evidence-based kernels and behavior vaccines” [<http://www.pfsacademy.org/communitytoolbox/trainings/06symposium/Embry/Morning/KernelArticle.pdf#search=%22%22evidence-based%20kernels%22>]. She stated that there might be too much emphasis on evidence-based practices (EBP); and that, rather than expecting high fidelity of the whole evidence-based program, we should focus on “kernels”, which are evidence-driven.

Ruth Gassman then asked for the rationale for high/low capacity communities. Mary Lay replied that some communities are ready for prevention efforts and others are not. Even though they [low capacity communities] show concern for the problem and are interested in reducing/eliminating it, they just don’t know how to handle the issue.

Eric suggested that grantees could define their capacity status [high/low] by their ability to use evidence-based kernels instead of their organization concept.

Ruth Gassman added that EBP are rigid, and therefore, often useless. She also pointed out that people sometimes seem to be “brainwashed” into thinking that EBP have to be used exactly as they are written [high fidelity], and that no deviation from the program is acceptable.

Dave Bozell proposed to offer a list of programs, from which communities can choose the program that best fits their needs.

Eric brought up the concern that low capacity communities might have difficulties with the “kernel model”. Ruth Gassman replied that the model doesn’t require much training because it breaks things into simple components. Eric then reiterated that the focus should be on EBP components (“kernels”) rather than the entire model.

Ruth Gassman recommended that prevention strategies should address three different populations: (1) individuals who don’t use, (2) individuals who use occasionally (recreational use), and (3) individuals who use heavily. She then asked, if the RFP only allowed for primary, or also for secondary and tertiary prevention. Eric responded that no restrictions were given regarding primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. However, a major flaw was the expectation to decrease statewide rates of use. Nonetheless, for evaluation purposes, effects of prevention efforts should be measured on communities rather than statewide.

Eric summarized that for the general RFP, at least one of the six prevention priorities has to be addressed. Furthermore, money will be allocated for: (a) capacity building grants (low capacity communities will be required to establish a partnership with a high-capacity mentor), (b) program implementation grants, and (c) statewide initiative grants; for an annual total of \$1.75 million.

Nikki Crawford asked if the grant money went to the best applicants, or if a certain amount of money was set aside for each priority. Eric replied that the best applicants would receive the grants.

Ruth Gassman asked which type of prevention [primary, secondary, or tertiary] was preferred. Eric responded that no preference was given. Mary Lay added that since the grant came from CSAP (Center for Substance Abuse **Prevention**), the emphasis should be on [primary] prevention.

Eric mentioned that the next Council meeting is on September 26, which he is unable to attend. *Indiana’s Allocation Plan* will be reviewed by CSAP, and in the next SEOW we’ll be discussing CSAP’s reaction to the plan.

Martha Payne wanted to know if cultural competency needed to be addressed. Eric affirmed.

Eric mentioned a possible exclusion criterion: state agencies (e.g., ICJI) maybe should not apply for the statewide initiative grant, due to conflict of interest. However, this would be a question for the state ethics commission. Barbara Seitz de Martinez stated that SPF SIG in other states might have had the same problem. Eric replied that he had not heard about a state agency apply for the grant yet. It was suggested to follow up with John Viernes regarding this issue.

Eric adjourned the meeting.